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SUBJECT: SECURITY COUNCIL WILL EXTEND MINUSTAH MANDATE, BUT
LENGTH OF EXTENSION STILL UNDECIDED

REF: STATE 10313

11. (SBU) Summary. During UNSC consultations on January 29, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) Edmund Mulet strongly defended recent joint operations between the UN and the Haitian National Police (HNP) against armed gangs in the Cite Soleil section of Port-au-Prince and vowed they would continue until the entire country is pacified. Chinese PR Wang confirmed that the PRC could accept a six-month extension of MINUSTAH's mandate at the current authorized troop/police strength, but insisted that the UN begin planning to wind down MINUSTAH and transition its operations in Haiti from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. Eleven other Council members, however, supported Ambassador Wolff's call for a one-year extension to indicate the UNSC's long-term commitment to Haiti. Partly in response to Chinese arguments that MINUSTAH's future should be limited, Mulet launched an impassioned appeal to the UNSC not to repeat the mistakes of the past by prematurely withdrawing from Haiti. End Summary.

Mulet Delivers Impressive Performance

12. (U) In his first briefing to the Council since becoming SRSG, Edmund Mulet strongly defended MINUSTAH's recent operations against gangs in Cite Soleil and vowed they would continue until the country is stabilized. Describing how difficult the conditions in Haiti's slums are, Mulet related how gang leader Evans recently executed at point-blank range twelve of his associates on suspicion of disloyalty and that nuns stationed in Cite Soleil report that gang members routinely rape girls as young as six years old. No job creation, investment, or rule of law institution-building could take place in this climate. Mulet argued that gang activity in Haiti, as opposed to other Latin American nations, threatens the stability of the entire country. While the challenges facing MINUSTAH are significant -- Mulet noted how gang members had recently fired 20,000 shots in one hour against UN peacekeepers in a bid to reclaim a four-story gang headquarters building in Cite Soleil -- the SRSG opined that most gang activity in Haiti is motivated by criminal and not political concerns and that MINUSTAH and the HNP would eventually prevail in their effort to restore security.

13. (U) In part to respond to Chinese arguments that MINUSTAH should begin to wind down its operations in Haiti (see below), Mulet launched an impassioned appeal to the international community to make a long-term commitment to the country's reconstruction. Noting that Haiti lacks the most basic institutions of the state -- customs officers at most ports and birth registries in most villages, for example -- Mulet argued that the international community could not leave until it helped the Haitians build at least a modicum of

institutional capacity. Recalling that there have been six multinational operations in Haiti since 1991, Mulet argued that each of them had been hobbled by the lack of a long-term vision. He appealed to donors to continue to support the GOH, particularly its &Plan d'Appeasement Social,8 as well as to extend trade agreements that would help to revive Haitian industry. The biggest challenge facing Haiti's reconstruction now, Mulet suggested, was not a lack of reconstruction funds but a lack of Haitian capacity and expertise to spend those funds wisely.

¶4. (U) Explaining why he thought Haiti now had a real chance to break with its history of political instability and violence, Mulet reported that Haitian political parties had begun working with each other to address the problems facing their country) he cited as one such example the unanimous confirmation of Prime Minister Alexis by the legislature. In response to South African PR Kumalo,s point about the need for national reconciliation (see below), Mulet said MINUSTAH would continue to promote dialogue and reconciliation but that the Haitians made significant strides towards this goal on their own. Noting that support for former President Aristide in Haiti has dropped dramatically over the past year, Mulet also rebutted Kumalo,s suggestion that some gang violence in Haiti could be politically-motivated by arguing that Haitian gangs are almost universally criminal, not political, organizations.

China Agrees to Six-Month Extension

¶5. (SBU) Before the UNSC meeting, Chinese PolMinCouns Li Junhua told USUN PolMinCouns that the PRC would agree to extend MINUSTAH's mandate for at most six months at the

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current authorized force levels, with the stipulation that the resolution would ask the Secretariat to provide "force reconfiguration" options in its next report to the Council. During UNSC consultations, Chinese PR Wang said he could accept a six-month extension -- with no details on force levels -- but focused most on the need for the UN to transition its role in Haiti "from peacekeeping to peacebuilding." Over the past three years, Wang said, the UN had restored order "for the most part" in Haiti and had helped carry out elections. Now the challenge facing the UN would depend more on building rule of law and economic institutions, tasks for which the GOH would have to take on a "primary role" and achieve self-reliance "at an early date." The UN peacekeeping budget is stretched thin around the world, Wang observed, and as a result the UNSC should soon expect the Secretariat to "carry out a full evaluation of security in Haiti to formulate a strategy for MINUSTAH's final withdrawal."

Large Majority of Council Supports One-Year

¶6. (U) All UNSC members except China, Russia, and South Africa expressed support for extending MINUSTAH's mandate by one year at the current authorized troop/police strength. Drawing from reftel points, Ambassador Wolff underscored the importance to Haiti and the region of extending the mandate for one year in order to send the GOH a signal of the international community's long-term commitment. Peruvian PR Voto-Bernales, offering a strong statement of Latin America's support for MINUSTAH, argued that the UNSC "must not recommit the errors of the pats with a premature withdrawal from Haiti." Emphasizing that MINUSTAH must intensify its efforts to ensure security in Port-au-Prince by maintaining pressure on armed gangs, Voto-Bernales also urged the Council to prioritize development in Haiti by tasking MINUSTAH to help coordinate reconstruction aid. France also welcomed recent MINUSTAH action against gangs in Cite Soleil, and called on MINUSTAH to use election resources freed up due to the completion of most of the transitional cycle to build the

GOH's institutional capacity.

17. (U) South African PR Kumalo spoke at length about the need for national reconciliation and dialogue in Haiti and suggested that Pretoria's position on the duration of the mandate renewal would depend on the extent to which MINUSTAH promotes such efforts. Noting that MINUSTAH has a mandate to promote reconciliation and dialogue under resolution 1542, Kumalo asked why the issue had not received much attention in the Secretary-General's last report and wondered if some of the violence in Haiti could be attributed to the lack of reconciliation. He also asked Mulet why he thought the situation in Haiti was different now than in the past) why the country,s fractious political parties would come together when they had failed to do so before (Note: The subtext of Kumalo's argument seemed to be that South Africa wanted reconciliation efforts to proceed in Haiti in order to facilitate the return of former President Aristide. End Note.). Russian PR Churkin expressed support for an extension of MINUSTAH's mandate but refrained from specifying a timeframe.

WOLFF